

The Lovely Ashes

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Summary: Rey has finally agreed to go on a date with Kylo Ren. He's redeemed, although nobody can call him Ben. He's lives on Coruscant, but he's not part of the resistance. He's renounced the Dark Side but still wears his black garb. She can trust him right? One shot, inspired by Ashgate

The Lovely Ashes

It was Rey's first date with Kylo Ren and she thought it had gone pretty well considering how different they were, not to mention their tangled history.

He'd first taken her out to dinner at a fancy Coruscant restaurant, then they had shared some seductive dances at a less than reputable downtown Hutt nightclub. She was feeling slightly tipsy from all the shots of Corellian Brandy he'd bought for her.

Now she was sat happily in the passenger seat of his luxury model speeder and as they hurtled down the highway at break-neck speed, she thought maybe she should have agreed to go out with him sooner than this. It seemed she had wasted a lot of time worrying over nothing.

He had declared his love to her about a month earlier and although she was attracted to him, it seemed inconceivable that she could date a man who had caused so much pain to herself and her friends. However that was all in the past and she had finally relented and so far, she was not regretting the decision. Right now, they were both laughing and talking fondly of past battles and humorous misunderstandings. She hadn't had so much fun in a very long time.

She would have liked to call him by his given name 'Ben'. After all he had renounced the First Order and come home to Coruscant to reunite with his family.

He was once again a 'Solo' and in her mind his original name seemed the most appropriate.

Strangely though he still preferred to be known as Kylo Ren or just "Ren" and she respected his wishes on this, even if she didn't agree with it.

He also still insisted on wearing his black outfits and robes (he was even wearing them on their date this evening.) Some things die hard she supposed.

Rey didn't mind too much, he looked hot as hell in his dark knight gear, which she had to admit looked much sexier than baggy brown Jedi robes; that's for sure! At least he'd not worn that freakish mask of his today and for Kylo Ren, this was real progress.

"Would you like to come back to my place?" he asked her suddenly.

Perhaps she should have expected him to ask her this. Ren had always been quite forward with her and he didn't shy away from any opportunity at intimacy. Sod propriety! She felt carefree tonight! The alcohol in her system was making her boldâ€¦

She beamed him a sunshine smile. "Sure, I'd love to, I've always wanted to see where you live."

He grinned back at her. "That's great, because we're already on our way there." He gave her his trademark smirk which she had once loathedâ€¦ but had now come to adore instead.

She sat back in her seat with flushed cheeks, breathing in the traffic fumes and loving life.

* * *

><p>After Ren had stored his vehicle securely in a speeder-park, he escorted her to the nearby block of flats where he resided within the 'Central Coruscant Senate District'. The area was pretty posh-looking to Rey.<p>

"_I should have guessed that the son of General Leia Organa was never going to be living in the slums!"_ she thought to herself.

Still, this place made her own humble abode look like bantha crap in comparison.

The Wookiee doorman growled a greeting to them as they entered his building and tipped his hat to welcome Master Ren and his lady friend. Once inside Ben pressed the lift call-button and they ducked into it quickly when it arrived.

"What floor?" Rey asked.

"Floor thirteen," replied Ren.

"Ooooo that's unlucky you know," teased Rey as she pressed the correct key and they started moving upwards. "I reckon it will be lucky tonight," he said with lust flashing in his large dark eyes. He

pulled her to him and proceeded to kiss her long and deeply with his gorgeous full lips. She could have lost herself right there in the lift, but for the

"_Ding!_"

The sound made Rey pull away from his embrace. The machinery halted and she yelped when he forcefully took her small fingers into his own much larger hand. He led her out of the lift and practically pulled her with him down the dimly lit hallway. She struggled to keep up with his long stride. He was certainly very keen! It was exhilarating to think she had the ability to arouse such passion in a man. However a small part of her knew she might be a bit out of her depth. She had to be careful with _this_ particular man.

He halted in front of apartment number thirteen.

"Floor thirteen _and_ flat thirteen, what are the odds of that huh?" she laughed a little nervously.

"I never ask what the odds are" he responded as if he didn't understand she'd been making a joke.

He swiped his key card in the slot and the door slid open. As they entered, he switched on the lighting and she finally got to see '_Casa de Kylo Ren.'_

Rey walked into what she assumed was the main living room. There were doors leading off to other areas. but there didn't appear to be any windows here at all. However, she couldn't even _begin_ to speculate on why this might be, or anything else for that matter; because _this_ room had already left her gobsmacked!

Knowing Kylo Ren's preferences she had expected to see a lot of black décor in his home and lo and behold she had guessed correctly! The carpets, linen, furniture almost everything was a shade of black or at the very least dark grey!

The thing that stood out immediately to her was the sheer amount of _weird stuff_ that was hanging on the walls as well as the huge storage units that seemed to dominate every space and alcove. From ceilings to floor there were shelves of containers and things that she could only describe as "knick knacks"

The air she was breathing felt thick and musty and she could tell there must be a fine layer of dust covering almost everything here.

"_Well, this is a bachelor pad_ it would be even stranger if it were spotlessly clean," she tried to reassure herself.

"Can I get you a drink?" He shouted out to her from the kitchen.

"Uhh yes thanks_ do you have caf?" she replied hesitantly.

"Yep, just let me grind the beans and brew it up_ I'll be back over to you soon," he confirmed.

As she heard him preparing their beverages, Rey continued to gaze at her surroundings. It was rather difficult to make anything out clearly as this flat seemed to wilfully deny the fluorescent lighting attempting to brighten it. "_This home is not unlike the man who lives in it,"_ she concluded.

Although she knew it was impolite to rummage through other people's possessionsâ€| Rey was still a scavenger within her heart and she could not resist getting a closer look at the massive hoard of items that Kylo Ren had seemingly accrued over his lifetime. She could not begin to fathom how he had managed to transfer all of this stuff over to Coruscant when he'd defected. Maybe he'd always owned a flat hereâ€|

She crept over to a nearby display cabinet to take a sneaky peek at his treasuresâ€| and promptly screwed her face up in confusion.

It contained rows of various-sized bottles, filled with fine grey powder. There also appeared to be dozens of small wooden bowls which held the same strange substance, albeit the particles were slightly larger and lumpier.

"_What the heck was itâ€| some kind of valuable spice?"_

She gingerly dipped her finger in one of the bowls and sniffed curiously. It smelled faintly of burning, but was still a mystery to her. She then put her finger in her mouth to see if she could identify it that way instead.

"_Ickâ€| ashes! Did I just eat someone's gross ashes!?"_

She stuck out her tongue and attempted to spit away the foul taste in her mouth.

With this alarming revelation she raised her head warily and stared around at the seemingly endless rows of urns and jars, all filled with _ashes!_

Her jaw dropped in amazement as her vision started to adjust to the gloom. She was now able to see that the 'weird stuff' on the walls were in fact skulls and pieces of bone hanging from hooks!

Several creepy-looking mannequins were also standing like sentinels between the pieces of furniture. They were dressed in battered pieces of armour and clothing which was often torn and stained. Rey recognised some pieces as belonging to resistance uniformsâ€|

"What theâ€| _fuck!?"_ she yelled internally. "_I have a bad feeling about this."_

"I see you are admiring my collection."

Rey jumped and turned around with a start.

Kylo Ren had returned with the caf and was smiling at her as he placed two steaming mugs on the table in the centre of the room.

"You're probably wondering what all of this isâ€| what it means?" he asked her in his usual deadpan tone. "I've wanted to share this with

you for a long time" to show you the _man_ behind the mask."

Her stomach clenched as he stalked over to her and possessively wove his arm around her waist like a serpent. He bent his head and pressed his lips against her soft brown hair. She'd worn it loose tonight because he'd told her once that he liked it that way. She could now feel his hot breath on her scalp and the sensation sent shivers up her spine.

"How many people do you think I've killed Rey?" he asked her.

Her heart was starting to beat wildly. "_No, he had changed hadn't he? He was no longer evil, no longer a servant of the Darkness. No this can't be happening!"_

"I" I have no idea" I've never even thought about it," she said as neutrally as she could manage whilst mentally noting the distance between herself and the front door of the flat.

"You're not a good liar Rey," he chuckled.

She felt him channel the Force and Rey heard the click of the front door locking with a triple bolting mechanism.

"_Shiiiiiiiiiiiit!"_ she thought with despair, she was trying hard to disguise her thoughts from him, but knew she was probably bleeding them out all the same.

He gestured with a dramatic wave at the macabre display in front of them both. "Just count the containers on show and you'll arrive at an accurate figure for the number of lives I've extinguished since my fall from grace."

Rey felt physically sick as she mentally tallied the volumes. There were clearly hundreds of dead beings sharing this room with them. She'd known his past was a bloody tale, but was now appalled at just how many he'd actually slain. Perhaps around six to seven hundred people!

"_Six-hundred and eighty-one, to be exact,"_ he corrected her telepathically.

Keeping his tight hold on her petite torso, he gently nudged her towards the seating area.

"Come and sit down, your caf will get cold" and there is more that I would tell you."

Survival mode was starting to kick in, and at this point Rey decided that she should play along and indulge Kylo Ren. She was now fully cognisant that she was on a date with the grim reaper himself, and he'd already cut off the only viable exit. There was little else she could do except avoid the urge to panic.

She sat down slowly onto a large and gleaming black leather sofa. It was surprisingly comfortable. Ren sat closely beside her" which was _not_ so comfortable.

It was a frightening situation, but strangely Rey could not help but focus on an _irrelevant_ carved black ashtray resting on the table.

It was emptyâ€¦ how ironic that an ashtray was one of the few things in here that didn't contain ashes!

"I don't smoke, it's just there for my _guests_," stated Ren, who had once again read her thoughts.

He took a swig of his caf and she followed his example by drinking as well, although it tasted as bitter as the ashes she had unwittingly consumed earlier.

It was hard not to cringe as his firm hand stroked up and down her back as he talked more about his beloved collection.

"Those jars over there contain the ashes of the padawans I killed at Luke Skywalker's academy," he said casually. "They did not put up as much resistance as one might have expected."

He waved to a bleached white skull that hung over a black mantelpiece. "That belonged to an old priest of the Church of the Force. Alas, poor Lor San Tekka, I knew him well."

Rey listened and sipped caf quietly as Ren continued to list out many names. Some of which Rey recognised. They included rebel alliance officers and force-sensitive fugitives. He quoted so many stormtrooper designations that he sounded as if he were speaking in some sort of binary language. The baritone of his sensual voice felt hypnotic.

The coldness and indifference in his speech as he talked about his past kills made Rey furious and in an instant of madness, she forgot her caution and interrupted him.

"Why do you keep their relics?" she asked angrily. "You should treat the dead with more respect!"

Putting his empty cup down on the table, Ren smirked back at her.

"You don't know the _true_ power of the Forceâ€¦ allow me to _show_ you the Dark Side Rey.

"_How could I have learned to like that hideous smirk,"_ she thought with shame.

He pointed towards a large hexagonal-shaped font to the side of where they were sitting. It was full of ashes and Rey recognised Ren's intimidating black and chrome mask sitting in the middle of the dusty pile.

She recalled she'd seen something similar in his interrogation room back on Starkiller Base. "You're on a date with a guy who interrogated you Rey, does that tell you something about your own sanity, let alone his?"

Ren seemed eager to explain the function of the font to her and she reluctantly listened.

"The Force is a part of all things in our galaxyâ€¦ but it flows strongest within living beings. When we die our souls become pure Force energy and ascend to another plane of existence. This energy is

incredibly powerful and some of it will _always_ cling to the mortal remains of the deceased. At the age of fifteen, I was taught an ancient Sith necromancer technique from Supreme Leader Snoke which allows me to harness this sacred energy. Since then, whenever I've defeated an enemy; I claim their bodies as my rightful spoils of combat and incinerate or flay the corpses as required."

Rey received a mental vision of this gruesome process, but was surprised that it was only generating a weak sense of nausea. It was confusing to her, but she was rapidly starting to feel very relaxedâ€¦| _euphoric_ even! Her limbs were feeling extremely heavy and her vision was blurring. She turned to Ren who was now regarding her with interest, his hand continued to stroke her back, he was trying to keep herâ€¦| _calm?_

"What have you done Renâ€¦|? Have you _drugged_ me?!"

The cup of caf fell from her fingers and smashed as it hit the floor; warm brown liquid splashed on her legs. She'd only drank half, but it was glaringly obvious that this was more than sufficient for its purpose.

She attempted to stand but her joints and nerves were all rapidly numbing. Despite her desperate efforts, all she could do was slump further back into the sofa, the leather creaked as her shoulders and head slid downwards. Even her throat and mouth muscles were affected, because when she screamed, nothing more than a faint moan escaped her lips.

He continued talking to her like nothing out of the ordinary was happening between them; as if they were simply sharing a _normal_ conversation.

"I retrieve and store my enemies' ashes to use in daily necromancy rituals. When I lay my helmet in these ashes, they imbue it with the Force energy of fallen souls, which provides me with enhanced power and abilities! However, some ashes are moreâ€¦| _potent_ than others. For instance the life essence of Light Side force users is highly desirableâ€¦| they are very rare and _precious_ indeed."

Rey was starting to slip into a dream-like state. She could make out the tall black-garbed figure of Kylo Ren looming over her before his muscular arms scooped up her limp form as if she weighed no more than a few grains of Jakku sand. She could feel the soft fabric of his clothing and the warmth of his chest, but very little else. The toxin which he'd used to poison her had paralyzed her body completely and incapacitated her with_ruthless_ efficiency.

"I carried you like this once before you know," she faintly heard him say.

She was aware enough to comprehend that he was taking her into another room in the flat.

It was now dawning on her that _this_ had been his plan from the start. He was going to murder her and then add her to his hoard of ashes. He'd been pretending all along, the First Order defection, his professions of love; it had _all_ been a sham!

"_How_ could I have been so stupid,"_ she berated herself. "_There was

never any good in him!"_

In addition to the physical effects, the drug was causing her to lose coherence mentally as well. She was in no state to shield her mind from Ren in any way and he hungrily absorbed every thought and feeling she projected.

"Yes Reyâ€¦ this is the day you will join the other angels in heaven. However you are mistaken in your assumption that I don't like youâ€¦ The truth isâ€¦ I love you. I think I've always loved you, but unfortunately you are also a very dangerous enemy and my greatest weakness. You have bested me in battle and have mercilessly haunted my dreams. Your light is as dazzling as it is bewitching and it will only grow stronger as time goes on. It's better that I end this torment now and take your power for myself while I still can."

The dark knight had brought her into a large and forbidding chamber with a huge plasma furnace in the wall. It glowed fiercely with an orange and blue hue, and it was the only source of light that Rey could discern. A silver-coloured metal gurney on wheels stood close to the hatch of the furnace and Kylo Ren was making his way towards it.

"Ben please, don't do thisâ€¦ youâ€¦ don'tâ€¦ have to do this!" she cried in a voice that was rasping and slurring, using the last scrap of strength she had left.

"My name is not Ben," was all he said in response to her plea.

Kylo Ren was now depositing her carefully onto the gurney. She knew her adrenaline should be running high, that fear should be consuming her, but the drug seemed to have dulled almost all her emotions.

"_He doesn't want me to suffer."_

She could see through half-lidded eyes that he was touching her cheek with his hand.

"I'm going to miss you terribly Rey, but I will be reminded of your beautiful hazel eyes, every time I make use of your lovely ashes, I won't ever forget you, I promise.

I wish I could tell you that we'll meet again someday when I too depart this mortal coilâ€¦ but somehow I don't think you and I will be going to the same place."

Rey felt her eyes inexorably closing. The sound of his voice, the sound of the blazing furnace nearby, it was all fading away.

"Goodbye my sweet little scavenger."

It was the last thing she heard before the oblivion of unconsciousness enveloped her.

* * *

><p>Kylo Ren stared down at the motionless figure of Rey laying on the gurney. Her face was serene, her arms were resting by her sides

and her legs were straight and perfectly aligned. She was positioned as if she were already a holy effigy, silently beseeching the maker to receive her soul.<p>

She'd worn a long and pretty white dress on their date and now it seemed to flow down her body like a stream of moonlight. The shroud of a mystical martyr. It was amazing how much power resided in such a small and innocent-looking vesselâ€| her relics would sustain him for a _long_time, perhaps for the rest of his life.

He had worn his ceremonial Sith attire in preparation for this act and Ren now pulled up the hood of his robe to cover his head and hide his wavy black hair. He needed to banish the human and wake the monster within him.

He unclipped his lightsaber from his belt and ignited the crackling crimson blade. The side-vents burst open to spew out the excess plasma. The red glow cast flickering shadows around the chamber. As he stood above Rey's prostrate and helpless form he turned the lightsaber downwards and raised the hilt high above his head.

Twisted as he knew himself to be, it was hard for Ren to proceed further. He knew what he had to do, but wasn't sure if he had the strength to do it! He'd thought that killing Han Solo would be the ultimate sacrifice that he'd ever have to make to the Dark Side, but _this_ was something else entirelyâ€|

He was offering up the girl whom he loved, the woman he had fantasised about marrying someday. It was _infinitely_ more difficultâ€| but of course the reward was _infinitely_ greater as well.

"Enough!" his shout echoed eerily around the chamber. There was no point in drawing things out.

He started to chant the short litany that was necessary for a ritualistic execution. Cadavers that he cremated did not usually require this step, as they were killed honourably in combat or as collateral damage from the First order war machine.

"_Rey Kenobi I am the bringer of death, the reaper of souls and your appointed time is nigh! Give unto me your life, so I may continue to serve the Darkness and usher in the brave new order."_

He let out a determined but terrible howl as he fiercely thrust the lightsaber down upon Rey. His aim was true as it swiftly pierced her chest and plunged through her heart, slicing cleanly through the bottom of the gurney. Her body convulsed once and was then still. The connection he had been sharing with her mind was brutally severed and this sudden loss of her presence instantly caused him to feel the most unbearable sense of emptiness. He sensed her soul brushing past his face as it floated away into the aether, then it was goneâ€| _she_ was gone.

"_Nooooooooooooooooo,"_ he wailed with sorrow.

He could feel tears running down his cheeks as he held his stance, gazing down at the terrible dark red blood that was starting to stain her white clothing around the fiery blade that impaled her. He could

see another pool forming on the ground near his boots as well. He eventually broke his morbid reverie and with one fluid motion withdrew the blade from Rey's lifeless shell.

The flesh was already starting to cauterise and the flow of her weeping blood began to slow and ebb.

He angrily threw his cursed lightsaber away from him and it clattered against the wall, cutting out with a hiss.

Grasping Rey's pale face between his long fingers, Kylo Ren savoured the touch of his soulmate one last timeâ€¦

"Forgive me my love, you were too good for this life, too pure to share the same existence as a tortured demon like me. I take solace knowing you dwell in a better place now, don't worry, my father will take care of you."

He let her rest once more in peaceful repose on the gurney.

Using the Force he opened the hatch on the furnace. The waves of intense heat hit him with ferocity. A hellish wind full of rage at the heinous act he had just performed.

"_It is for the greater purpose. I have sacrificed all in my devotion to the Dark Side, my faith shall ultimately be rewarded."_

This reaffirmation filled him with renewed vigour and cleansed him of the roiling emotions that had been swirling within him.

Now, once again he was stoic and detached; he was '_Kylo Ren_', Master of the Knights of Ren, the rightful heir to the Galaxy.

He took hold of the handles on the metal gurney and wheeled it to the edge of the furnace entrance. He then lifted it sharply so it sloped inwards and watched impassively as the lifeless body of the girl he'd once successively fought, hated and loved; slipped downwards and fell into the boiling inferno.

End
file.